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ABSTRACT

Instructor attitudes toward students with non-native accents were examined in a study of 55 student teachers attending a small, private liberal arts college in the San Francisco (California) area. A review of the literature included information on error analysis, communication, general attitudes, instructor attitudes, and classroom behavior and practice. Instructors were asked to give their opinions of the speaker in a German-accented tape recording of a selection from "A Tale of Two Cities." Results indicate the reactions were neither clearly positive nor clearly negative, but contain elements of both. Responses fell into 15 categories, such as: listen more carefully; be more patient; give student no special treatment; suggest student employ voice modulation; ask student to repeat; ask student to slow down; and request information about student's heritage. Research implications are noted. The questionnaire is appended. Contains 50 references. (LB)

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THE RAIN IN SPAIN STAYS MAINLY IN THE PLAIN:

HOW ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEACHERS VIEW NON-NATIVE STUDENTS

a research project on instructor attitudes towards
students who possess non-native accents
in their spoken English

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Dominican College
Department of Education in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Master of Science degree
in Education: Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

The American educational system must handle ever-increasing numbers of students who speak little or no English. The resulting inability to communicate creates friction between such students and their monolingual teachers, as each try desperately to make the others understand. This study examines the attitudes of student-teachers towards pupils who possess a non-native accent in their spoken English. The study focuses on the opinions of a group of 55 student-teachers attending a small, private liberal arts college in a suburb of San Francisco. The research project includes a questionnaire and a descriptive analysis of the responses. Results indicate that opinions are neither clearly positive nor clearly negative, but contain elements of both. Finally, the paper identifies several areas of further study, and suggests methodologies designed to ameliorate the classroom atmosphere for those students currently experiencing a language barrier.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Individuals' voices are as unique as their personalities. It is not always necessary to see one's interlocutor in order to know with whom one is speaking. This is especially true in a classroom situation. An instructor does not need to see a student misbehave in order to know whom to punish.

Speech style is a major factor in determining just how positively or negatively the listener responds (Williams, 1970). When one hears a voice one likes, one is more apt to pay attention to what is being said than if the voice is disliked. Instructors are no less influenced by students' voices (Brophy & Good, 1974, cited in Bailey & Galvan, 1979). Howard Giles, a respected author in the field of Education, makes the following assessment of instructor attitudes towards students' speech patterns.

> First, teachers themselves consider children's nonstandard dialects and accents, along with poor housing, to be the most important factors contributing to their educational disadvantage. (Edwards, 1974, cited in Dillon, 1980).
>
> Second, teachers appear to place more weight upon speech style cues in assessing children's scholastic potential than upon their looks or their written work. (Seligman et al., 1972; see, however, Piche et al., 1977, both cited in Dillon, 1980) (Dillon, 1980, p. 671)

Just how strongly do students' vocal patterns influence their teachers' assessments of them?

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine what effect accented English speech produces on teachers who speak English as their native language. What are teachers' reactions to those students who speak English with a non-native accent? This study is not concerned with the attitudes of instructors of English as a Second Language. Its focus is the opinions that other single- and multi-subject classroom teachers hold towards students who converse in accented English.

Accented English refers to spoken dialect that contains non-standard intonation patterns, such as the German pronunciation of "w" as "v" or "th" as "d". When one commences learning a second language, one tends to take pronunciation patterns from the native language and transfer them to the new language, until the proper patterns are acquired. Sometimes these errors are never replaced by the new language accent. That explains why it is generally easy for a native speaker of any language to identify a non-native speaker.

III. RATIONALE

How does one define prejudice? One study conducted in the field of psychology by Allport and Kramer (1946) employed the following definition: "An individual's belief that certain religious, racial, or economic groups are uncongenial to him." (Allport & Kramer, 1946, p. 11) What causes prejudice? Many studies have been conducted on this issue. None have arrived at the answer. The study cited above suggested that one possible cause of prejudice is the mixing of two or more groups of unequal social status. Sparks fly as each group vies for power at the expense of the other. This study has important implications for the teaching profession. Students continually attempt to best the instructor through practical jokes, feigning ignorance and calling out in class. Instructors try to maintain order by raising their voices, handing out penalty assignments, and occasionally resorting to sending chronic disruptors to the principal's office. Should the

students win, chaos results. Instructors must retain control in order to teach. The battle never ceases.

The rationale behind this study is to examine whether or not the voices of students for whom English is a non-native language negatively influence the opinions instructors have of them.

IV. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

Seligman, Tucker, and Lambert (1972) found that a pupil's voice may be the key factor in determining how a teacher feels towards that student. Ford (1984) documented that teachers favor non-Spanish influenced speakers even when their written work is academically matched with that of unaccented speakers.

There is little information available on this topic. This researcher has found material that focuses more on native-speaker attitudes in general, and not on teachers' points of view. What information there is, is in the form of unpublished dissertations and conference papers that are unavailable to the general public. The majority of the available research focuses on the native-speaking population in general, and not on one specific profession.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

Setting the Stage

Xenophobia is not the sole property of any one culture. The adage "When in Rome...." exists in all languages. The foreigner must adapt to the ways of the other country, not the reverse. This is all well and good, but why is it that even if expatriates have an excellent command of the language, they are still not fully accepted by the natives of their chosen country? "Once a foreigner, always a foreigner," some might say. Others argue that assimilation is a two-way street. Whenever a non-native speaker attempts to converse with a native, it is as much the duty of the listener to accommodate the speaker, as it is for the interlocutor to make sure he is understood. Such give-and-take is

especially important in an academic setting (Shana'a, 1978).

Researchers agree that individuals are judged by how well they converse in the accepted standard dialect of any given area (Callan and Gallois, 1981 and 1983; Chastain, 1980; Delisle, 1982; Fayer and Krasinski, 1987; Galloway, 1980; Ludwig, 1982). The intent of this review is to examine seminal articles in five key areas of accented speech analysis. These articles outline research possibilities regarding accented speech that range from the general to the specific. The types of studies conducted in the following articles ranged from analyses of only the mistakes, to defining the miscommunication resulting from ossified errors, to character judgements based on the nonstandard speech samples used in the research. These varied forms of classification necessitated subdividing this Literature Review.

The articles discussed here are not limited to English speakers' views on non-native speech. Such tunnel vision on the part of this researcher is impractical. There are not enough articles generally available on English attitudes in order to conduct an adequate study. The language outlooks studied include French, German and Spanish. The use of such cross-cultural research is vital in understanding universal language attitudes. Clarifying why certain errors are considered critical in miscommunication is an important first step in comprehending the prejudices held against individuals who speak accented versions of any given language.

Influential Voices in the Field

ERROR ANALYSIS

A pilot study by Politzer (1978) evaluated the attitudes of German teenagers towards errors in spoken German. Politzer concluded that school experiences are the most important influence in determining the seriousness of grammatical errors. The implications of this study are that incorrect vocabulary choices result in more negative responses from well-educated German teenagers than do errors of syntax. This study is faulty, in that it used two groups of students

from Gymnasiums, and one group from a German Hauptschule. This is the approximate equivalent to comparing the responses of two groups of American Junior College students to those of a group of American high school students.

The experimental group consisted of 146 students, 80 males, 66 females. No control group was used. The subjects listened to a recording of 60 pairs of sentences (fully reproduced in the article), all containing one or more errors. All sentences were recorded by a bilingual (German-English) woman who adopted a slight American accent in her speech for the purposes of this recording. The subjects indicated which of the two phrases contained the more serious error. The responses were then compared using analysis of variance. Mistakes in word choice were consistently deemed the most serious barriers to comprehension, followed by errors in verb morphology. In nearly one-fourth of the responses, the Hauptschule students' choices of error severity in each pair of sentences differed from those of the Gymnasium students. This significant deviation is not analyzed in the article. The research implications of this study are that speech errors do elicit negative responses from listeners. Further research needs to be conducted that focuses strictly on listeners' attitudes towards types of errors encountered in accented speech.

A study by Ensz (1982) demonstrated that some Frenchmen engage in error ranking. The study conducted used the matched guise test. The number of subjects was not reported. Fifteen samples were used, recorded by two American males and one American female. The subjects rated the speakers based on pairs of stereotypes associated with Americans. Findings indicated that guise one, the only one containing grammar errors, was systematically rated least acceptable by all subjects. Research implications of this study are that more cross-culture research needs to be conducted regarding the attitudes of native speakers towards non-native speech.

A study by Piazza (1982) paralleled the research conducted by Ensz (1982, cited above), and indicated that French lycee students also engage in error ranking. The experimental group consisted of 267 seventeen- and eighteen-year old Parisian students. They analyzed 100 grammatically incorrect sentences based on one of four forms: sentence comprehensibility, spoken presentation; sentence

comprehensibility, written presentation; sentence irritation, spoken presentation; sentence irritation, written presentation. All sentences were produced by beginning American students of French. Findings indicated that identical errors were deemed more acceptable when presented in written rather than oral form. Implications of the study are that French instructors should correct only those types of errors for which lack of native-speaker tolerance has been demonstrated. Other, less serious errors can be left alone, and possibly corrected at a later date. Further research needs to be conducted as to which types of errors are universally unacceptable to French teenagers.

COMMUNICATION

A study by Guntermann (1978) indicated that beginning second-language learners simplify the grammar of the new language in order to facilitate communication. The study examined what effects the resulting ossified errors had on comprehension. Thirty native Spanish speakers listened to Spanish recordings of four males whose native language is English, and who had attained minimal proficiency in Spanish. The listeners were asked to restate the sentences based on what they thought the speaker was trying to say. Findings indicated that grammar errors may not be as serious a barrier to communicating with native speakers as believed. Implications of this research are that the severity of miscommunication varies, depending on the error in question.

A study by Galloway (1980) indicated that non-native teachers of Spanish are the harshest critics of non-native student performance in that language. Four groups evaluated the oral abilities of ten second-semester university level Spanish students. The evaluator group was divided as follows. One group of eight non-native high school Spanish instructors, one group of eight native-speaking high school Spanish teachers, eight native speakers of Spanish who are not teachers, who live in the United States and have a good command of English, and eight non-teaching native speakers who reside in Spain, whose English is non-existent to poor. The control group evaluated videotapes of the students. Findings indicated that judgments of

linguistic communicative ability varied among groups. The better a non-native's command of Spanish, the more critical both groups of native speakers became. The non-native teachers were the most critical of the students, downgrading them both for employing non-verbal means of communication, and for speech errors that did not perturb the native listeners. Implications of the study are that a non-native instructor of Spanish is not necessarily the best judge of how well a beginning university student can communicate in Spanish.

GENERAL ATTITUDES

A study by Gynan (1984) examined interlanguage attitudes, which he defined as follows.

> An interlanguage attitude is operationally defined as a global native speaker evaluation of nonnative speech, represented by a tape sample of nonnative narrative.
> (Gynan, 1984, p. 320)

An important component of Gynan's article is a review of several key articles in the field of error analysis (Delise, 1982; Galloway, 1980; Ludwig, 1982; Politzer, 1980; also cited by this researcher). Gynan criticized the authors for claiming to evaluate the speech sample in their research, even though their data presents judgments of the speaker. Evaluation of the speech errors was conducted simultaneously with a character analysis of the speaker. The resulting data was too subjective to accurately assess the native speakers' opinions of the speech sample used. This researcher concurs in Gynan's finding.

Gynan's study indicated that the attitudes native speakers hold towards non-native speech do not correspond with their opinions of non-native speakers.

> .....native raters generally were not highly sensitive to any particular aspect of language and that they treated the affective language item just as they did evaluative items. (Gynan, 1984, p. 318)

Five recorded samples of different types of Spanish were analyzed by an unidentified number of native speakers. Findings indicated that it is indeed possible to determine objective opinions of speech samples. Research implications are that anyone wishing to determine attitudes towards language errors must carefully design the format used, so that the desired data is obtained with a minimum of outside influences coloring the responses received.

INSTRUCTOR ATTITUDES

Marks and Heffernan-Cabrera (1977) examined the attitudes instructors possess towards bilingual minority groups. The conclusions to their research were that opinions that were assumed to be negative were, in fact, positive. Their positive findings indicated that it is possible to select Anglo teachers for a bilingual program who carry favorable impressions towards Spanish speakers. The problem with this research is that all participants were teachers who volunteered to participate in a bilingual program.

Fourteen teachers in all participated in the study. An additional 17 teachers served as the control group. Further information on the characteristics of these groups was not reported. The experimental group received training in bilingual methodology and taught in a bilingual setting for one school year. A Bi-Polar Adjective Scale was used to measure instructor attitudes toward accented speech. This test was administered to the experimental and the control group. No information on reliabilty and validity of this test instrument was provided. Both groups listened to audio tapes of four male bilingual speakers who read various passages of approximately two minutes in length. All subjects rated the speakers on 12 personal characteristics.

Results for both the experimental and control groups indicated a higher positive reaction to the speaker when he spoke Spanish than when he spoke English. There was no statistically significant difference between the groups. Weaknesses of the study include the fact that all participants were volunteers, and that every speaker judged was male. The experimental group was carefully selected and given extensive pre-test training, and teaching experience. The research implications of this study are that all volunteer subjects, regardless of training for bilingual education, will most likely possess similar attitudes towards bilingual speakers.

Dillon (1980) asked Howard Giles and Jitendra N. Thakerar several questions pertaining to instructors' reactions to students' speech styles. They responded by composing the article published under Dillon's byline. Giles and Thakerar stated that there is a consensus across socio-economic lines that nonstandard speakers are disadvantaged speakers, especially when entering the job market, and in the quality of medical care they receive (St. Clair & Giles, 1980, cited in Dillon, 1980). They further noted that, if the general populace holds these beliefs, it is only natural that instructors will concur in these negative stereotypes (Moore, 1980, cited in Dillon, 1980). Giles and Thakerar acknowledged the subjectiveness of the assessment of nonstandard speech styles, and of those speakers who converse in them. They indicate that the unfavorable reactions nonstandard speakers receive is based more on the negative stereotype of them as a social group, rather than on the linguistic components of their speech.

> Indeed, as pointed out by many commentators, the unfavorable reaction made to nonstandard speakers are due less to negative views of nonstandard speech, than they are to the fact that these people are categorized as an underprivileged, and often inferior group who would be denigrated however they spoke. (Harrison & Trabasso, 1976; Taylor, 1971: both cited in Dillon, 1980) (Dillon, 1980, p. 672-673)

According to the literature, vocal patterns are influential cues by

which instructors judge their students. (Brown, 1969; Labov, 1966; Lambert, 1967; Tucker & Lambert, 1969: all cited in Seligman, Tucker & Lambert, 1972) Students who converse in nonstandard dialects are more quickly branded as "disadvantaged", or otherwise stigmatized throughout their educational careers. Giles and Thakerar indicate that the fact that nonstandard speech is deemed unintelligible is based on social norms, rather than on the linguistic components of the dialect in question. (Taylor & Simard, cited in Dillon, 1980)

Giles and Thakerar mentioned racial pride as a major component in determining whether or not nonstandard-speaking students choose to acquire the standard dialect. If they feel comfortable in the academic atmosphere, they more readily decide to become part of it by learning Standard English. According to the authors, the first step on the path to student acquisition of Standard English is instructor acceptance of the students' primary dialect.

The educational implications of this research are that instructors must become conscious of students' divergent backgrounds, and accept them as they are, before expecting them to acquire a form of speech that is alien to their cultural experience. Children are more skilled in interpersonal communication than they are given credit for. Instructors must understand that the linguistic behavior witnessed in the classroom is just one facet of students' language skills. There is no universal version of Standard English, merely major subdialects, with each as the accepted norm in different areas of the English-speaking world. Each dialect is a valuable means of communication full of nuances and meaning to those for whom it is the primary language. Categorizing students based on verbal patterns alone is detrimental to both the child and Academia itself.

CLASSROOM THEORY AND PRACTICE

It needs to be noted that when educators refer to "Nonstandard English in the Classroom", they are primarily referring to students' use of Ebonics, or "Black English". While that is not the focus of this study, this author will analyze some information on ways to ameliorate the English spoken by some African-American children. Such information is

useful in determining how to better help immigrant children acquire standard American English. It is important to keep in mind that any deviation from the accepted speech pattern in any specific region, however slight, classifies that speech as "nonstandard".

The articles examined in this section do not follow the standard form of a journal article. Although each was obtained from an educational journal, none of the authors conducted their own studies. Their conclusions are based on their own analyses of other articles on the topic.

Hess (1974) analyzed over fifteen hundred documents written about nonstandard English dialects. The author makes some important points, primarily in the relationship of dialect speakers (students), and standard speakers, (instructors and other authority figures). When the two groups communicate, each thinks it is making perfect sense. Unfortunately, the differences in dialect engender miscomprehension. The resulting garbled messages frustrate everyone.

Hess indicated that many linguists and educators believe that instruction in a standard dialect is vital for children's economic, academic and social progress. Even so, Hess stressed that instructors must, first and foremost, accept nonstandard-speaking students as they are, and not instantly brand them "disadvantaged" or "lazy" due to the difference in dialect. Instructors cannot expect students to learn what they are trying to teach unless there is mutual respect.

> It is important that all pupils, including those who do speak a regionally standard dialect, and their teachers recognize that every dialect is logical, systematic, and worthy of respect. (Hess, 1974, p. 288)

Hess stated that educators must encourage the acquisition of Standard English <u>in addition to</u> the nonstandard dialect, not <u>in place of it</u>. This approach is akin to encouraging students to study a foreign language later in school.

> Of special significance to the educator is the finding that some children must learn not just a second dialect, but a second language. (Hess, 1974, p. 283, underscoring mine)

Hess noted that the most common methods of Standard English instruction, correction of usage and formal grammatical study, have been proven ineffective. One new method of instruction that Hess suggested was the contrastive approach. This method identifies the differences between standard and nonstandard dialects, and indicates that the latter is merely an additional method of communication. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to speak, just different ways of saying the same thing.

Hess discussed motivational techniques to encourage the acquisition of Standard English. Racial pride was mentioned as a strong motivational tool opposed to learning a standard dialect. The more students sense instructor disapproval of their cultural heritage, the more students cling to the language patterns that identify that subculture. If students feel that the instructor accepts them, the better the chance that students will want to attain proficiency in Standard English. The students' motivation can be either instrumental or integrative.

> Motivation is instrumental when the pupil learns a standard English dialect to "manipulate" others to attain economic, academic, or social goals. Motivation is integrative when the pupil wants to become a member of the group that uses the language.....The learning of a second dialect, therefore, can be fostered by attitudes of acceptance from parents and teachers. (Hess, 1974, p. 287)

Hess concluded the article by stating four prerequisites for effectively instructing students who speak Ebonics, or any other English dialect, in Standard English.

> First, teachers must have accepting attitudes toward language and language variety.
>
> Second, teachers should be knowledgeable about language and dialect in general, and they should be familiar with the major substandard dialects their pupils might use.
>
> Third, teachers should be informed about the culture of their pupils who use nonstandard dialects.
>
> Fourth, teachers should be familiar with the various methods found to be effective in teaching language. (Hess, 1974, p. 288)

Hess' article advocated an interdisciplinary approach to language instruction. This method should combine the sociological, political and psychological components of second language acquisition. Hess concluded by recommending inservice training for teachers in those methods of standard English instruction that do not destroy students' self-esteem in the process. The educational implications of this article are to be commended. Even so, other methods of instructor education must be examined.

In order to be effective, attendance at inservice sessions must be voluntary. The instructors must feel that the subject matter is relevant to their current professional needs. They must be included in the planning stages, and there must be adequate follow-up. Even the most well-intended information will be ignored if it is disseminated in mandatory lecture-style sessions. The students ultimately pay the price in this lack of insight into conducting effective inservice programs (See: Byrne, 1983; Holly, 1982; Ingvarson & MacKenzie, 1988; Marshall, 1988; Neil, 1985; Vaillancourt & Bachus, 1987.).

Bailey and Galvan (1979) evaluated numerous articles on the treatment of Hispanics in the classroom. Literature indicates that instructors give different evaluations of the dialects spoken by Anglo, African-American and Hispanic children. Anglo children receive the

highest rating, Hispanics the lowest (Williams, 1970, 1973a, 1973b, Williams, Whitehead & Miller, 1971a, 1971b, Williams, Whitehead & Traupman, 1971). One study the authors examined indicated that instructors "protected" those students who were considered academically poor, and that this group consisted primarily of Hispanics. Instructors accomplished this by asking those students only "yes" or "no" questions, or queries that merely asked for information rather than analysis (Brophy & Good, 1974).

The focus of Bailey and Galvan's study was the following question.

> If extraneous factors such as a student's clothing and personal cleanliness can influence a teacher's perception of a child's ability, how and to what extent can a student's accent influence a teacher's perception of that child? (Bailey and Galvan, 1979, p. 86)

The literature they analyzed indicated that individuals consciously distinguish among accent varieties. The authors cited in this article found that the opinions held of the language correlate with the character judgements of the speakers. If the speaker is highly regarded, then the accent is respected. If the speaker is denigrated, so are the vocal patterns used. Finally, even instructors are unduly influenced by the degree of a student's accent. (Arthur, Farrar & Bradford, 1974; Galvan, Pierce & Underwood, 1975, 1976; Politzer & Ramirez, 1973)

Bailey and Galvan cited literature supporting their belief that providing information to instructors about their classroom behavior is useless without assisting them in changing their behavior (Jacoby, 1976; Tuckman, McCall & Hyman, 1969). Bailey and Galvan stated that such support is vital, if the treatment of Hispanics in classrooms is to improve.

The authors advocated some form of inservice training, as did Hess (1974, cited above) as the best means of achieving the desired changes. Again, the idea is laudable. However, those instructors who most need such training are precisely those individuals least likely to voluntarily attend such programs.

VI. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH METHODS

INSTRUMENTS

Prior to conducting this study, this researcher asked a friend whose native language was German to record the last seven paragraphs of Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities. A complete transcript of the recording is contained in the Appendix. The woman's voice still contains typical Germanic speech patterns, although she has lived in North America for many years. She occasionally pronounced "th" as "d", always pronounced "w" as "v", and when she said the word "weeping", it could be mistaken for "veaving". A short questionnaire was written in which the subjects were asked to report how they would respond to the voice if the speaker were a student in their class and asking a question. A sample of the survey is also provided in the Appendix.

VII. RESULTS

The researcher was interested in determining the pattern of responses of a group of 55 student-teachers from a small, private liberal arts college in a suburb of San Francisco to the accented English speech of a hypothetical student. Results were analyzed using descriptive statistics. No pilot study was conducted, hence validity and reliability information is not provided.

Fifty-five subjects participated in this study. The surveying instrument required a narrative response to the question posed. Certain response trends became apparent upon analysis of the data. These response trends formed the categories contained in the following summary tables. There were 95 total responses, only 75 of which were relevant to the purposes of the study. These 75 responses fell into 15 categories. The 15 categories fell into three sub-headings: Positive Responses; Negative Responses: and Both Apply.

TABLE 1

POSITIVE RESPONSES: IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND STUDENT'S QUESTION, SUBJECT WOULD.....		
CATEGORY	*NO.*	*PERCENTAGE*
Listen More Carefully	8	33%
Be More Patient than with Native English-speaking Students	2	8%
Give Student No Special Treatment	10	42%
Show Student Respect	4	17%
TOTAL	*24*	*100%*

The largest category in this table contained 42% of all positive responses. Ten subjects indicated that they would extend no preferential treatment to the voice presented, were the hypothetical student asking a question. Individuals who speak accented English are well aware of their different speech pattern. Students with foreign accents may avoid speaking in class due to the unwanted attention they receive on account of their voice. Treating them the same as the other students is a positive step in encouraging them to contribute to class discussions. Their participation increases both their grasp of the subject matter and their facility with spoken English.

The other significant category contained 33% of all positive replies. Eight subjects indicated that they would listen more carefully in order to better hear the student's question. The voice is not always an accurate form of communication. The listener needs to focus intently on what is being said in order to fully comprehend the speaker's message. This is especially true when conversing with individuals who have difficulties with oral means of expression. These students are well aware of their hardships with language. They appreciate the

teacher's added support, attention and patience. Other studies have shown that teachers, in fact, give less time to slower students who are speaking in class than to the sharper ones (Rowe, 1969, cited in Bailey and Galvan, 1979).

TABLE 2

NEGATIVE RESPONSES: SUBJECT WOULD RESPOND TO STUDENT'S QUESTION BY.....		
CATEGORY	*NO.*	*PERCENTAGE*
Asking Student to Slow Down	5	15%
Asking Student to Repeat Words or Phrases	7	20%
Suggesting Student Employ Voice Modulation	8	23%
Advising Student to Enroll in Speech Courses	1	3%
Prompting Student	4	12%
Addressing Student as if Addressing a Much-Younger Child	4	12%
Ignoring Question, as Responding To It Takes Too Much Time Away From the Other Students	1	3%
Losing Interest in Student's Question due to Voice Timbre	4	12%
TOTAL	*34*	*100%*

The eight negative sub-headings were divided into two sets. The researcher placed the first five categories under one heading. In these cases, it is up to the students to alter their speech patterns to fit the nuances of American Spoken English, as the subjects indicated that they would make no effort to accommodate the student's linguistic capabilities. If the students fail to make the required changes,, their questions remain unanswered. The final three response types are indicative of subjects' negative feelings about the voice of the hypothetical student.

The largest category in the table received eight responses or 24%. Subjects would advise the student to employ voice modulation in order

to ease comprehension. Younger children are not yet capable of such vocal nuances. For them, a change in modulation means an increase in volume. This suggestion might work with older children. If, however, the child is unfamiliar with the vocal patterns of American English such advice is meaningless.

The second-largest grouping of negative subject response to accented speech polled 21%, or seven answers. The respondents would ask the child to repeat words or phrases. The student faced with such a request may just give up on the question posed, as repeating the query takes too much time, time which the student wants to spend doing something else. Children have short attention spans. If the subjects expect children to adapt to adults' slower means of expression, the students quickly become frustrated and bored with their own question.

TABLE 3

RESPONSES FALL INTO EITHER CATEGORY, DEPENDING ON ETHNICITY OF STUDENT ASKING QUESTION		
CATEGORY	*NO.*	*PERCENTAGE*
Changing Body Position to Better Hear Student	5	29%
Requesting Information about Student's Heritage	10	59%
Asking Student Questions to Clarify Student's Query	2	12%
TOTAL	*17*	*100%*

The subheadings in the preceding table could indicate either a positive response to students who speak Accented English or a negative one. The placement depends on the ethnic background of the student in question and her interpretation of the instructors' response to her question. Unfortunately, few American mainstream teachers receive any training on intercultural differences before receiving international students into their classrooms. (Bailey & Galvan, 1979; Hess, 1974) Such inservice programs would alleviate many of the

problems caused by the clashing of cultural points of view. Some examples of different cultural perspectives, and the resulting classroom clashes are provided in the following analysis.

The largest category in the table is one that everyone is guilty of: Curiosity. Ten subjects, 59% of the respondents, replied that they would ask the accented English-speaking children questions about their background, due to interest sparked by hearing a nonstandard accent. Such questions, in and of themselves indicate prejudice, as it is not likely that American educators would ask the same questions of their native-speaking students.

Within the Hispanic and Brazilian cultures, the fact that strangers ask personal questions is accepted as part of the cultural makeup of the countries. Americans are often startled at the forwardness of some of the queries. Even so, any attempt the American makes at maintaining privacy is considered insulting. Children from these backgrounds are less reticent at responding to questions that others might find inappropriate.

French children, on the other hand, are very reticent to respond to personal questions asked by someone they do not know well. The French are very closed off emotionally to anyone outside their immediate family. This distrust of foreigners is known as m(fiance, and is ingrained into children from a very young age. They are taught that certain information remains en famille. Given time, the child may eventually respond, but only when ready to do so. To ask these children for private information before they have accepted their new situation is insulting. The educator becomes infuriated when the child refuses to answer. The resulting battle for information is one that would not have occurred, had the instructor been presented with some information about the student before their initial meeting.

TABLE 4

TOTALS		
CATEGORY	NO.	PERCENTAGE
Positive Responses	24	25%
Negative Responses	34	36%
Both Categories Possible	17	18%
Inapplicable Data	20	21%
GRAND TOTAL	95	100%

At first glance, it appears that the subjects' response to the taped sample of accented speech presented is inherently negative. The eight subgroups of negative responses contained 36% of all responses, whereas the combined total of the replies in all four positive subgroups was only 25%. It is interesting to note that these percentages are only 11 points apart. Very few of the responses were either clearly positive or completely negative. The majority of the data fell into the gray area in between, with both responses combined.

The other three categories hold the swing vote. If, based on the ethnicity of any given student, the 18% in this category is added to the positive column, then the response is positive, with 43%, as opposed to 36%. If the 18% falls into the negative category, then the response is clearly negative, with 54%. Every situation is different. Individuals rarely respond the same way twice, even in similar circumstances. If presented with a student who spoke accented English, there is no guarantee that the subjects would actually respond as they indicated on the survey.

VIII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The questionnaire should have divided the experimental group by type of credential, rather than by gender of respondent. Such a division would result in a more even distribution of group members. If

others conduct an identical study, this means of comparison is suggested.

In addition, obtaining a sample of nonnative narrative from an adult was a mistake. The majority of the subjects recognized that the speaker was no longer of school age. This knowledge colored their responses.

Numerous subjects also expressed confusion as a result of not having been told what passage they were about to hear. The researcher expected this finding, as the failure to identify the passage was deliberate. The students were supposed to focus on the voice, and not on the context of the passage. Several subjects who did identify the passage became involved in the spirit of Dickens' work. They responded to how the speaker presented the passage, and not to the question that was posed. This extraneous information resulted in inadmissible data. Perhaps it would have been wiser to have asked the speaker to tell a story rather than read a set passage. The intent was to facilitate the speaker's task, not to hand subjects a red herring.

This study offers numerous research implications. The survey could be administered to an identical group of subjects under similar conditions, and the resulting data compared with what was reported here. A companion study would be to observe the subjects in this study while actually teaching. The purpose of this would be to determine whether or not they actually respond to a student who spoke accented English as they indicated in their answers. Both the research articles studied and the results of the study indicate the strong need for instructor inservice education. Such training is necessary, in order to ease the situation of accented English speaking students. Opinions are as different as the individuals who hold them. When working with subjective information, a myriad of interpretations are possible. The data obtained in this study could have been analyzed many different ways. The results of this study are but one interpretation of the information contained herein.

APPENDIX A:

TAPE TRANSCRIPT

They said of him, about the city that night, that it was the peacefullest man's face ever beheld there. Many added that he looked sublime and prophetic.

One of the most remarkable sufferers by the same axe-a woman-had asked at the foot of that same scaffold, not long before, to be allowed to write down the thoughts that were inspiring her. If he had given utterance to his, and they were prophetic, they would have been these:

'I see Barsad, and Cly, Defarge, The Vengeance, the Juryman, the Judge, long ranks of the new oppressors who have risen on the destruction of the old, perishing by this retributive instrument, before it shall cease out of its present use. I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long years to come, I see the evil of this time, and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out.

'I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous and happy, in that England which I shall see no more. I see Her with a child upon her bosom, who bears my name. I see her father, aged and bent, but otherwise restored, and faithful to all men in his healing office, and at peace. I see the good old man, so long their friend, in ten years' time enriching them with all he has, and passing tranquilly to his reward.

'I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generous hence. I see her, an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day. I see her and her husband, their course done, lying side by side in their eternal bed, and I know that each was not more honoured and held sacred in the other's soul, than I was in the souls of both.

'I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name, a man winning his way up that path of life which once was mine. I see him winning it so well, that my name is made illustrious there by the light of his. I see the blots I threw upon it,

faded away. I see him, foremost of just judges and honoured men, bringing a boy of my name, with a forehead that I know and golden hair, to this place-then fair to look upon, with not a trace of this day's disfigurement-and I hear him tell the child my story, with a tender and faltering voice.

'It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.'

The above paragraphs were taken from the Oxford Illustrated Dickens edition of A Tale of Two Cities p357-8, Oxford University Press, New York, 1987.

APPENDIX B:

SURVEY

Please take a few minutes and complete the following questionnaire. Base your responses on the tape recording you are about to hear.

1. How would you respond to the voice, if the speaker were a student in a class you taught, and were asking you a question? Please elaborate on your answer.

And now, some information about you.

Please circle one: M F

Are you a native speaker of English? Y N

Thank you for your assistance.

APPENDIX C:

PROCEDURE

A copy of the questionnaire was distributed to all subjects. The following statement was read to both groups before the recording was turned on.

> I would like you to respond only to the voice you hear. The tape quality is not that great, and you will hear some extraneous page turning. I ask that you focus on your feelings, responses, reactions and impressions based on the voice you hear. Please write until you come to the end of the page, and do not forget to answer the brief questions on the second page. Due to the nature of the research, I cannot answer any questions at this time. Thank you for your assistance.

The subjects listened to the tape. They were given approximately 15 to 20 minutes to respond to the surveys before they were collected.

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